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Johnson's New Office in Austin Called Roomy and Imposing, but Not Lavish

By Stuart Long

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AUSTIN, July 10—That \$10 million marble palace with a fireplace big enough for 10-foot logs that the Citizens for Goldwater and Miller complained about last fall was opened for inspection by newsmen today.

It is the Texas office of President Johnson on the top floor of the new \$7.5 million Federal Building complex here.

It's neat, roomy and imposing, but it isn't what could really be called lavish. The only marble was in the executive bathroom, and there was not much of it there.

Furnishing are of the modern type about like you'd find in a \$200-a-month furnished apartment. The difference is in the electronics, the security and the beautiful woodwork done by members of Carpenters Local 1266.

The executive suite covers a 77-by-100-foot half of the ninth floor of the building. Recorded music with four channels to choose from is wired into every room.

In front of the presidential desk is a battery of three TV sets with a remote control gadget on the desk, so all three networks can be watched at the same time. The sitting room with the fireplace has a console TV-radio-record player, also with remote control.

Every door leading to the outside hall has two locks. And the other Federal agencies on the ninth floor are of a nature that their personnel will not have to have further security checks before becoming presidential neighbors. They include the FBI, the Secret Service and a man whose name is given on the lobby directory only as William B. Wood. He's the Southwest personnel representative for the CIA.

The fireplace extends into the sitting room, with a copper hood overhead. It has hearths on three sides, and you could

firebox is only about four feet long.

The presidential office on the northwest corner overlooks the Johnson family's TV and radio building four blocks away, and the LBJ penthouse apartment atop it, in case the President wants to get a signal that it's time to come home to supper. The office is 22 by 35 feet, with a sofa and chairs at one end and huge windows on two sides.

The suite also has other offices for aides and secretaries, a typists' workroom, and a 22-by-30-foot pressroom, already equipped with a \$4000 copying machine to turn out the press statements. The pressroom could not begin to hold the White House press corps that accompanies Mr. Johnson to Texas.

Horace Busby and Marvin Watson, White House assistants, said they did not know when the suite will be used. The President has not visited it since an early construction stage. Mrs. Johnson has been there several times, however.

One portion of the suite was not opened to newsmen, including a communications center, a large meeting or dining room and a small "galley" or warming kitchen. Watson said this

part of the suite was locked because it is not yet furnished.

As for the teakwood trim the Republicans said was being used, newsmen got varying answers, but most of the paneling appeared to be oak, with some walnut ceiling work.

Last fall the head of the General Services Administration estimated the suite and various other additions had increased the center's cost \$503,920.

The Austin firm of Brooks & Barr were the architects for the job. Max Brooks of that firm has handled most of the Johnson family work. The firm recently got the contract for the new U.S. Labor Department building in Washington.